

Remarks

This amendment does not result in an increase in the total number of claims pending or in an increase in the number of independent claims pending. Furthermore, this amendment is filed in response to the Decision mailed on 12 January 2009. This amendment is being filed within the one month period set for response subsequent to the Decision. Accordingly, no additional fees are necessitated by this amendment.

For the Claims:

Applicants presented claims 1-2 and 4-20, of which claims 1, 15, and 20 were independent claims. This Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8-13, objects to claims 5, 7 and 14 as being dependent upon rejected base claims, and allows claims 15-20. Applicants hereby amend independent claim 1 and dependent claim 7, cancel claims 2, 4-6, and 8-13, and retain claims 14-20 as originally and previously presented. Applicants respectfully requests reconsideration.

This Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 4, and 6 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Davenport, U.S. Patent No. 4,890,638 (hereinafter Davenport). The Decision affirmed the rejection of claims 2, 4, and 6 made by the Examiner in this Office Action. Applicants cancel rejected claims 2, 4, and 6.

Independent claim 1 is being amended to include the limitations of objected to claim 5, and claim 5 is being canceled. Accordingly, claim 1 should now be found allowable over the cited prior art. Claim 14 depends from amended independent claim 1 and is believed allowable by reason of dependency.

Objected to claim 7 is being amended to reflect dependence from amended claim 1 to track the above discussed amendment of claim 1 and the cancellation of claim 6. Furthermore, the claim 7 is being amended to include the limitations of rejected claim 6. Accordingly, claim 7 should now be found allowable.

This Office Action rejects claims 8-11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Davenport, in view of Guardshack Product Line Brochure GS.1.2000b (hereinafter Guardshack). The Decision affirmed the rejections of claims 8-11 made by the Examiner in this Office Action. Applicants cancel rejected claims 8-11.

This Office Action also rejects claims 12 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Davenport and Guardshack, in further view of Clements et al. (hereinafter Clements). The Decision affirmed the rejections of claims 12 and 13 made by the Examiner in this Office Action. Applicants cancel rejected claims 8-11.

Accordingly, this Amendment cancels claims 2, 4-6, and 8-13, and amends claims 1 and 7. Claim 14 remains in the application as originally presented and is believed to be allowable. In addition, claims 15-20 remain in the application as originally and previously submitted, remain allowable as indicated in the Office Action and are believed to be allowable.

Applicant believes that the foregoing amendments and remarks are fully responsive to the rejections and/or objections recited in the 14 June 2006 Office Action and the 12 January 2009 Decision and that the present application is now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Meschkow', is written over a horizontal line.

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